

**SPECIAL MEETING
BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
(PUBLIC PARTICIPATION)**

September 4, 2002

7:00 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

Mayor Baines called for the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silent prayer is observed.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Gatsas, Guinta, Sysyn, Osborne, Pinard, O'Neil,
Lopez, Shea, DeVries, Garrity, Smith, Thibault and Forest

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is to give residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the Board on items of concern affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to two minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and any comments must be directed to the Chair.

Mayor Baines requested that any resident wishing to speak come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized, and give their comments.

Gerry Therrien, 51 Shaunna Court, Manchester stated:

Good evening. What I would like to do is share with you tonight some thoughts I have on taxes. I want to start by saying that I am a lifelong resident of Manchester. I decided back in 1974 to stay in Manchester because there were a lot of positive things happening from when I was a child and I think a lot of us are aware of that. I willingly pay my taxes and I think it is a good investment of my money. I get good police service, my children went to good schools, we have good roads and the services the City provides are good services. I am satisfied and I think the only thing we can do is get better. We are already good at least. When I pay my taxes I expect that the funds I contribute will be used to run City government and provide services for the general public. Now to get down specifically to the issue that I want to address with you. It seems that a couple of weeks ago there was a telephone poll taken of the Board of Aldermen asking if they would support giving or contributing \$2,000 to the American Legion Sweeney Post. I wonder if the Aldermen were aware and considered that Sweeney Post is a private organization with restricted membership. It is not a public organization. I wonder and it leads me to question if because it was done so quickly there was any research done to validate that all of the players because I have been told by some Aldermen that they approved the money to be used for the players and I wonder if there was

any research done to verify that all of the players are from Manchester. If some of them are not, what has the Board of Aldermen exposed themselves to in terms of funding activities for non-residents of Manchester with our tax money? Finally, I think that decision has opened the Board to many other requests. As I was telling Alderman DeVries earlier, I referee soccer and I know there are a lot of soccer teams in the City and I think you all are aware of it. They go to regional play-offs all the time. Are you prepared to have these people approach you on a continual basis asking for money? I think this decision was done with a good heart but I think it probably should be reviewed and maybe in the future a different decision could be made. In closing I want to say that again I am happy to contribute my tax dollars because I think I get a good service for them. When I want to contribute to something I willing reach into my pocket and give it voluntarily with no strings. My concern is I don't like it when somebody else reaches into my pocket and uses my money for something that I don't think is appropriate. In closing I just want to mention that I don't have an issue with the American Legion and I don't have an issue with this Board. In terms of the American Legion, I have been, I am and if they will continue having me I expect to remain a member of a local Legion Board. I thank you all for your time and attention.

Harold Levine, 49 Hillcroft Road, Manchester stated:

Good evening Mr. Mayor and the Aldermanic Board. About a month ago I think there was an article stating that the Mayor wanted to consolidate and try to save money with the different departments. If I go back directly to the last Administration, they talked and consolidated a number of different departments. They put Cemetery into Parks & Recreation. They put Building Services in with the Highway Department and others. The taxpayers of Manchester are very fortunate to have a man like Frank Thomas and his staff running the Highway Department because he has saved the taxpayers loads of money. With the last Administration and with this Administration they have never said no. I think these departments have enough work and enough credibility to remain the way they are. There could be a number of smaller departments at City Hall consolidated. To me after studying a lot of things I have mentioned in the past about a motor pool. When I said a motor pool I was referring not only to cars but trucks, off road equipment, etc. I dug up from 1998 a report that was never implemented. I think it cost the taxpayers \$70,000. It was the operation of fleet management, etc. To me, this is where I believe we would be saving a lot of money if we could implement this. This was in 1998. A lot of the Aldermen here tonight have been on the Aldermanic Board but nothing has ever been done. I was just wondering if it will. I think if you go to the City Clerk's Office from 1998 you should read this report on fleet management, especially page 25 where it says the City of Manchester would have a job implementing a lot of things because of the way the City writes contracts with the unions and they couldn't get by a lot of this. I believe one of the main issues I have with the taxpayer's money is at one time the School Department...I think they go way over budget, not with our students. They steal from our students. There are too many unqualified, high paid personnel there. I don't think...I tried to volunteer a number of years ago to help them out with bus routes and everything but it wasn't welcome. I think just the bus routes, etc. with some of

these private companies are...the taxpayers are spending too much money on the School Department. There is not enough money trickling down to the students. Years ago it used to be 84% for overhead. I would say today the way money is being spent over there it is possibly closer to 90%. It is only the children of the City of Manchester who get zonked at any given time. I think that it is about time that you people on the Aldermanic Board start using the input of the citizens of Manchester instead of politically connected people. Stop giving away property that taxpayers are paying for until the year 2013. Stop giving buildings away like the last Administration has done and put things out for competitive bidding where they should be.

Mayor Baines advised that there being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of Alderman Thibault, duly seconded by Alderman Pinard, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

This being a special meeting of the Board, no further business was presented and on motion of Alderman Forest, duly seconded by Alderman DeVries it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk